Chapter 23

Ed. D. Castillo

The Native Response to the Colonization of Alta California

With the approach of the Columbian Quincentennial and recent efforts to canonize Junípero Serra, considerable attention has been focused on the many accomplishments of the Spanish in Alta California. What frightens many people is the thought that Hispanic boosterism and religious conviction stirred up by these twin events may again attempt to mask the not so flattering realities of the Spanish Colonial empire. What many apologists for the Spanish mission system have in common is an extremely low and disparaging attitude toward the Indians of California. Their reasoning appears to suggest that whatever befell the native peoples of Alta California during the mission era, it was preferable to their native culture, and in fact, somehow uplifting. Despite legal and Christian moral arguments put forward by Franciscan historians and others, the Spanish Crown/Franciscan empire benefited only a handful of natives. The vast majority of California mission Indians were simply laborers in a larger quest for worldwide domination by that eighteenth-century empire. It seems important to the majority of the descendants of these mission Indians that a voice be raised in their defense concerning the alleged benefits Indians received under the Spanish empire. It is equally important to document and analyze native resist-

soldiers were reinforced by royal presidio troops stationed at four points along the Camino Real. The priests also orchestrated a system of informants, with some natives acting as majordomos, and kept the neophytes in line with liberal doses of the whip. Examples and analysis of these conditions can be found in the writings of Spanish church and military authorities, foreign visitors, and historians and anthropologists (Bancroft 1886–1887:Volumes I and II; Cook 1976; Costo 1988; Geiger and Meighan 1976).

Catastrophic attacks of virulent European diseases took a heavy toll of native lives. Spanish medical practices being ineffective, the priests could only watch as thousands of their laborers suffered and died. The death rates for these epidemics ranged as high as 60 percent of the total population (Cook 1976:3–34). This unfortunate situation fueled the Franciscan demand for more laborers. Thus missionary-inspired paramilitary expeditions began to recruit reluctant tribes for conversion as early as 1797 (Cook 1976:75).

As a result of missionization and the military occupation of their country, the unfortunate natives suffered a rapid and steep population decline (see Walker and others in this volume). In some cases, the process became irreversible and whole tribes eventually disappeared (Cook 1976:399–446).

Internal Resistance

Not surprisingly, the Indians began to react negatively to this threatening situation. Resistance to the colonial "new order" emerged almost at once. This study reviews native passive and active resistance to the missions, missionaries, and soldiers on this remote rim of Christendom.

Undoubtedly passive resistance to the new order was the most widespread negative response to the classic mission environment. Several factors made this so. The nearly total absence of experience in organizing and carrying out warfare hampered native military organizational efforts. Traditional political authority seldom went beyond the village level. The neophytes were targets of a well-established church–military plan featuring an elaborate system of native informants, majordomos, and coopted local captains. These factors, combined with the cultural shock of removal from their native villages and the conglomeration of other native groups thrown together and withering under virulent catastrophic epidemics, provided ample cause for internal resistance.

Infanticide and Abortions

One of the most disturbing trends in passive resistance was infanticide and abortions practiced by native women. A contemporary sympathetic observer married to a San Gabriel neophyte informs us, "They necessarily became accustomed to these things [being raped by Spanish Soldiers], but their disgust and abhorrence never left them till many years later. In fact every white child born among them for a long period was secretly strangled and buried" (Heizer 1968:70).

The priests went to extremes to prevent such practices. Lorenzo Asisara, a

Santa Cruz neophyte, tells us about Padre Ramon Olbés's attempt to stamp out this practice:

> He (Olbés) saw that two of the [neophyte women] were scratched in their faces because they had been fighting out of jealousy. He separated them to ascertain why they had scratched [each other]. One was sterile and the other had children. When the father became aware of the cause of the quarrel, he asked the sterile one why she didn't bear children. He sent for the husband, and he asked him why his wife hadn't borne children. The Indian pointed to the sky (he didn't know how to speak Spanish) to signify that only God knew the cause. They brought an interpreter. This [one] repeated the question of the father to the Indian, who answered that he should ask God. The Fr. asked through the interpreter if he slept with his wife, to which the Indian said yes. Then the father had them placed in a room together so that they would perform coitus in his presence. The Indian refused, but they forced him to show them his penis in order to affirm that he had it in good order.
>
> The father next brought the wife and placed her in the room. The husband he sent to the guard house with a pair of shackels. The interpreter, on orders from the father, asked her how it was that the face was scratched. She replied that another woman had done it out of jealousy. The father then asked if her husband had been going with the other woman; she said yes. Then, he asked her again why she didn't bear children like the rest of the women.
>
> Fr. Olbés asked her if her husband slept with her, and she answered that, yes. The Fr. repeated his question "why don't you bear children?" "Who knows!" answered the Indian woman. He had her enter another room in order to examine her reproductive parts. She resisted him and grabbed the father's cord. There was a strong and long struggle between the two that were alone in the room. She tried to bury her teeth in his arm, but only grabbed his habit.
>
> Fr. Olbés cried out and the interpreter and the alcalde entered to help him. Then Olbés ordered that they take her and give her fifty lashes. After the fifty lashes he ordered that she be shackled and locked in the nunnery. Finishing this, Fr. Olbés ordered that a wooden doll be made, like a recently born child; he took the doll to the whipped woman and ordered her to take that doll for her child, and to carry it in front of all the people for nine days. He obligated her to present herself in front of the temple with that [doll] as if it were her child, for nine days.
>
> With all these things the women who were sterile became very alarmed. The vicious father made the husband of that woman wear cattle horns affixed with leather. At the same time he had him shackled. In this way they brought him daily to mass from the jail. And the other Indians jeered at him and teased him. Returning to the jail, they would take the horns off him [Asisara 1877].

This brutal reaction seems to suggest that the Franciscans suspected all infertile women of practicing abortions. The public beatings and humiliations were aimed at preventing such behavior.

Cook concluded that negative environmental factors, such as unsatisfactory diet, diseases, and the oppressive restrictions on native physical and cultural expression contributed to the elaboration of an occasional sporadic cultural phenomenon (abortion and infanticide) into a serious attempt to check population growth (Cook 1976:112).

Another form of passive resistance among long-term neophytes was slow and poorly accomplished work. Reid informs us about the mental state of the neo-

much of the native economy. Neophytes in whose territory missions were established were forced to flee into other tribal territories. The unhappy consequence of this was that neighboring gentile villages became infected with Spanish diseases and church-sponsored military expeditions were brought to their rancherías. These expeditions, whose purported mission was to return runaway neophytes, frequently seized gentile women and children and took them to the missions. Later, when the missions began to militarily recruit distant tribes to bolster the dying populations, fugitivism became epidemic. Although fugitivism was not easily maintained, a significant number of Indians found it preferable to the authoritarianism of Franciscan rule (Cook 1976:56–64).

Indians usually escaped from church/military authority individually or in small groups. However, massive defections began to occur as early as 1795. In September of that year, 200 Costanoan neophytes abandoned Mission Delores to escape the cruelty of Padre Danti (Bancroft 1886–1887:I:709). In the last years of the mission system, massive escapes increased steadily. Of the total 81,586 neophytes who were baptized, thousands escaped temporarily but 3,400 escaped permanently (Cook 1976:59). Most central and northern mission neophytes fled into the central valley of California, which Padre Payeras called "a republic of hell and diabolical union of Apostates" (Bancroft 1886–1887:II:331). The ones who escaped were only those young enough and healthy enough to flee. Too often the very young, the old, and the multitude of the infirmed were unable to escape their oppressors.

Fugitivism occurred because of the neophyte dissatisfaction with mission life. But the Franciscans were not about to allow their forced laborers to simply walk away. Once within the missions, neophytes were not free to leave. If they fled, they were hunted down by soldiers, priests, Indian allies, and sometimes Hispanic civilians. Pagan villages that harbored runaways were punished. Village captains were either flogged or killed (if they resisted), and a number of unlucky pagans were required to join the captives and march back to the missions, where further beating awaited them (Cook 1960). Russian otter hunter Vasilli Petrovitch Tarakanoff witnessed this chilling episode of brutality to captured runaways:

> They were all bound with rawhide ropes and some bleeding from wounds and some children were tied to their mothers. The next day we saw some terrible things. Some of the run-away men were tied on sticks and beaten with straps. One chief was taken out to the open field and a young calf which had just died was skinned and the chief was sewed into the skin while it was yet warm. He was kept tied to a stake all day, but he died soon and they kept his corpse tied up [Rawls 1984:38].

Such treatment is not easily forgotton. Twentieth-century descendants of mission Indians kept oral histories of Spanish oppression. One of John P. Harrington's Chumash informants says this of her grandmother's attempts at running away, "[She] had run away many, many times and had been recaptured and whipped till her buttocks crawled with maggots" (Laird 1975:18). Other similar stories continue to be passed on from generation to generation (Costo 1988:131–156).

As the years of Spanish mission activities progressed, the cycle of brutality increased steadily. Force and threats were used to keep Indians working in the Franciscan plantation-like missions. Military forays to recapture the thousands of runaways confirmed for the interior Indians the tales of a Franciscan "reign of terror" told to them by the runaways. Soon both fugitives and gentile rancherías bordering on areas of Franciscan occupation began to offer armed resistance to the church/military expeditions looking for the fugitives. However, in contrast to earlier experiences, these interior groups began to acquire Spanish horses and arms, and, perhaps most important, they began to understand the threat that Spanish colonization posed to their families, homes, economy, culture, and ultimately their lives.

Individual Assassination

A particularly native reaction to the missionary violence and oppression was for servants to poison the Franciscans. In aboriginal society, powerful witches were sometimes poisoned by their clients or rivals (Kroeber 1976:851–879). Many Indians viewed the priests as powerful witches. From a native point of view, this made sense. It was easy to see the soldiers and civilians were men like themselves. But the padres' religious, political, and military power wreaked havoc upon Indian families, land, natural resources, and their culture (Shipek 1986:13–14). Several assassination attempts, some using poisons, occurred.

In 1801, three neophytes poisoned both priests at Mission San Miguel. While those two were recovering, a third priest (Father Pujol), sent to replace them, was himself poisoned by the neophytes and died within a month. Three neophytes were eventually arrested, but escaped because of a drunken sentinel, only to be recaptured later (Bancroft 1886–1887:II:147–150). For trying to kill a padre with a stone in 1805, the military flogged a San Miguel neophyte 25 lashes on nine successive feast days and 35–40 lashes on nine successive Sundays, while different groups of neophytes were compelled to watch (Bancroft 1886–1887:II:163–164). Also in 1801, Ipai neophytes killed a particularly sadistic majordomo (a thug employed by the padres to enforce discipline) at Mission San Diego (Cook 1976:129). At the same mission three years later, Padre Panto was given a lethal dose of poison by his personal cook Nazario. The terrified neophyte admitted killing the priest to escape the padre's intolerable beatings. Just before the assassination he had received in succession 50, 25, 24, and 25 lashes with a whip (Bancroft 1886–1887:II:345).

In October of 1812, Padre Quintana of Santa Cruz Mission had made for him a wire-tipped whip (which cut the buttocks deeply) and used it on nine luckless neophytes. When this new instrument of torture was introduced and the priest nearly beat two Indians to death, a number of them decided to kill the sadistic padre. On the night of October 11, Quintana was lured outside the mission compound and strangled. The conspirators placed the padre's body in his bed to suggest that he had died of natural causes. And indeed the ruse worked. The priest was buried two days later. However, about two years later the assassination was uncovered as the result of an argument between two neophytes over

the priest's stolen booty. Fourteen neophytes were arrested and imprisoned. Eventually eight were convicted and sentenced to 200 lashes each and to presidio labor for 10 years in chains. Evidence exists to suggest that only one of the condemned survived his sentence (Bancroft 1886–1887:II:388).

Armed Resistance

Violent group hostilities during the Spanish occupation gradually evolved as Indians watched the Spanish replace traditional village-based leaders with those groomed for leadership by the Spanish priests. The Ipai and Tipai Indians, whose territory was the site of the old Mission San Diego, were the first Indians to offer widespread armed resistance. This was a classic example of resistance orchestrated by traditional village-based leaders. The trouble began within a month of the founding of the Mission San Diego (June 1769). The Ipai showed no fear of the Spanish but expected gifts from them for the use of their territory and resources. Seeing the scurvy-ridden garrison, the Indians refused all offers of food, but asked for cloth. When Spanish gifts failed to satisfy the natives, they attempted to pillage the supply ship anchored in the bay. The Spanish responded with persuasion, threats, and even the noise of firearms. These demonstrations were met with ridicule.

On August 15, the local Indians entered the Spanish compound to seize the clothing and gifts they expected. When met with resistance, they killed one of the colonists and wounded a priest and three others. Junípero Serra witnessed this attack, cowering in a hut, and had a colonist drop dead at his feet. The Spanish responded with a volley of musket balls, which killed three Indians and wounded several. The attackers fled, and an uneasy peace ensued. The Ipai remained both skeptical and hostile to Spanish intentions, failing to provide even one convert for nearly two years (Bancroft 1886–1887:I:137–139).

Spanish presence in Ipai territory resulted in a soon to become familiar pattern. Padre Luis Jayme wrote prophetically to his superiors,

> At one of these Indian villages near this mission of San Diego, which said village is very large, and which is on the road to Monterey, the gentiles, therein many times have been on the point of coming here to kill us all, and the reason for this is that some soldiers went there and raped their women, and other soldiers who were carrying the mail to Monterey turned their animals into their fields and there ate up their crops. Three other Indian villages have reported the same thing to me, several times [Geiger 1970a].

He further presented evidence of three additional gang rapes, one of which describes a blind Indian woman being beaten and carried screaming into the woods to be ravaged. Father President of the Missions, Junípero Serra failed to address this issue of sexual abuse of his charges in any of his reports to his superiors. Tragically, the pattern persisted throughout the Spanish empire in Alta California (Cook 1976:24–25).

Perhaps inspired by this and other offensive behavior on the part of the colo-

Figure 23-1. Costanoans fighting Spanish soldier by T. Suría, ca. 1791. (Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California)

nists, two traditional leaders—Francisco of Cuyamac and Zegotay of Matamo—began to call upon all the villages for miles around to rise up and kill the Spaniards. Eventually nine villages joined together to form an army of at least eight hundred warriors. They devised a plan to simultaneously attack the presidio and the new mission site several miles away. On November 4, 1775, about half of the group surrounded the mission, neutralized the neophytes, and prematurely attacked the Spaniards there. First torching the tule roofs of the compound, the Ipai killed a blacksmith, a carpenter, and Padre Jayme. In the confusion of smoke from the burning buildings, the rest of the colonists, several of whom were wounded, sought shelter in a tiny adobe structure and managed to hold out until dawn, at which time the attackers withdrew.

In the meantime, the second group of natives, on their way to attack the presidio, feared that the fires, smoke, and gunshots at the mission under siege would alert the soldiers and abandoned their plans (Bancroft 1886–1877:I:249–255).

The outcome of this episode clearly demonstrates the Spaniards' determination to militarily enforce Franciscan domination in and around San Diego, and the Ipai intentions in seeking to destroy the mission. One leader, captured and questioned after the inevitable punitive military campaigns, clearly stated the native viewpoint. They wanted to kill the priests and soldiers "in order to live as they did before" (Cook 1976:66).

In fact, the Ipai proved to be the most troublesome challengers of Spanish authority. Two years after the destruction of mission San Diego, the local Indians

killed a Spanish soldier just north of San Diego. Several months later, the Ipai of Pamó Ranchería rounded up three neighboring bands to drive the Spaniards out of their territory. They sent a message challenging the soldiers to fight. Presidio soldiers surprised the Ipai at Pamó, killing two and burning several others. Most of the rest surrendered. The four village captains were convicted by a military court of trying to "kill the Christians." The sentence was death, despite the fact that the presidio court had no legal authority to execute Indians. The leaders—Aachil, Aalcuirin, Aaaran, and Taguagui—were executed by firing squad with the blessings of Padre Lasuen on March 11, 1778. This was the first public execution in California (Bancroft 1886–1887:I:315–316).

The Ipai's violent group resistance to Spanish colonization bears witness to their recognition of the threat that the Spanish presented to their freedom, culture, land, and natural resources. Neither Spanish soldiers nor priests could compel these Indians to relocate permanently at the mission site. Cook summarized their response to missionization this way: "Being endowed not only with considerable energy and drive . . . They were never tractable as laborers. Beyond the distance on one day's march they remained unconquered and predominantly unconverted throughout mission history" (Cook 1976:66).

The most successful native rebellion against Spanish colonization was organized and executed by a Quechan *Kʷaxót* (civil leader), whom the Spanish called Salvador Palma. The territory of the Quechan peoples included lower Colorado River drainage. Spanish explorers pioneered a route linking Sonora and the new province of Alta California through the heart of Quechan territory between 1774 and 1776. Spanish authorities soon recognized that this route was the only possible overland communications and supply line between New Spain and Alta California. It therefore became essential to establish friendly relations with the numerous and powerful Quechan nation (Bowman and Heizer 1967). Despite a shower of gifts to Palma and other leaders, the Spanish found the Quechan difficult to control. On their side, the Quechan found the colonists who began to arrive in 1780 to be without the promised gifts and to be generally lazy and obnoxious.

The Spanish monarch had declared that no Quechan lands would be given to Spanish colonists (Bolton 1930:V:399–401). Despite this official policy, by January of 1781, 160 Spanish colonists, soldiers, and four priests had established two pueblos within Quechan territory. This group began flogging the Indians and expropriated their farmlands. At this point, an additional 140 *gente de razón* (Hispanicized colonists), under Capt. Fernando Rivera Y Moncada, and 257 head of hungry stock animals arrived at the new pueblo Concepción. This last group also arrived without the promised gifts and their stock promptly devoured already tightly stretched Quechan resources. These actions triggered a plan to violently eject the Spanish from their territory.

On a hot July 17, 1781, the Quechan attacked both pueblos with war clubs and arrows. In two days of fighting, 55 Spaniards were killed, including 4 Franciscan priests, 31 soldiers, and 20 settlers; 67 civilians and 5 soldiers were captured (Forbes 1965:204). Three major punitive expeditions were organized over the next year that accomplished little more than the negotiated release of the

captives and the sacking of a few Quechan villages. Spanish plans to execute Palma and three other leaders of the revolt failed. Furthermore, they were never again able to establish themselves among the Quechan and thus lost the only overland route between Alta California and New Spain. Significantly, this was the first time that the Spanish had faced Indians of California who were mounted on horseback and using some Spanish weapons, including firearms. This omnious trend was to continue and expand in later Indian and Spanish military conflicts (Forbes 1965:207).

Four years later, a plot to kill the priests and soldiers at Mission San Gabriel was organized by a 24-year-old female shaman named Toypurina. She was sister to the captain of *Japchivit* village. Allied with her was the neighboring traditional *Tumi* (chief or captain) called Nicholas Jose of *Sibapet* village. The conspirators were trapped and disarmed by alerted sentries. Although her plan to be rid of the colonists failed, she was able to express her contempt for them at her trial. She warned Christian Indians not to believe in the priests: "I hate the padres and all of you [referring to soldiers present at her interrogation] for living here on my native soil—for trespassing upon the lands of my forefathers and despoiling our tribal domains" (Temple 1958:148). Toypurina was exiled while Nicholas Jose and two other village captains were sentenced to terms of labor at the presidio.

The San Diego, Colorado River, and San Gabriel uprisings were organized and led by leaders whose authority sprang chiefly from tribal societies threatened by Spanish colonial activities. Later resistance leaders tended to be more talented and charismatic neophytes with no claim to traditional leadership status. Indeed, they arose from the chaos and breakdown of traditional societies within the mission system.

A kind of guerrilla warfare emerged as the Spanish military grip tightened about areas of Hispanic occupation. Disenchanted neophytes often fled their respective missions and joined like-minded bands of refugees. Typical of the type of leadership to evolve was a Coast Miwok named Lupugeyun, called Pomponio by the Spanish. This daring and resourceful ex-neophyte led a band of followers who pillaged and raided missions and rancho estates from Soledad to Sonoma. Despite numerous military campaigns organized to capture this renegade, he remained active for five years. After being captured and killing a soldier during his escape, he and a trusted lieutenant fled north toward his ancestral home in Marin County. There he was pursued by soldiers and Hispanic civilians to a canyon near Novato. After a hard fight, Pomponio and his wounded companion were captured in the fall of 1823. He was shackled and imprisoned at Mission Carmel. A military court ordered Pomponio to be executed by firing squad. That sentence was carried out on February 6, 1824. That the authorities viewed this renegade's career as a real threat to Hispanic control can be established by the extraordinary contemporary correspondence that refers to Pomponio as an insurgent (Brown 1975)! Later renegades, like Laquisamne Santa Clara Alcalde (called Yozcolo), followed a similar strategy of guerrilla resistance established by Pomponio (Holterman 1970a).

After 1800, a large-scale stock-raiding complex emerged along the fringes of

the occupied territories. Oftentimes escaping neophytes would seize mission stock as they fled into the pagan interior. Once free, many allied themselves with interior groups in order to raid the mission's horse herds to maintain themselves (Holterman 1970b; Waitman 1970). A brisk horse trade with interior tribes developed as a result (Broadbent 1974). These activities stimulated a 40-year cycle of military campaigns, which became increasingly violent. Near the end of the Mexican era in California history, these interior groups threatened to expel the colonists from all interior settlements (Cook 1960, 1962).

Armed uprisings among Indian neophytes in whose territory long-established colonial institutions existed were much more difficult to carry out successfully than those cited earlier. Shortly following California's hesitant allegiance to the newly independent Mexican Republic, a widespread armed rebellion broke out among California neophytes at the Santa Inés, La Purísima, and Santa Bárbara missions. These three missions occupied Chumash Indian territory.

The Chumash originally numbered approximately 18,000 persons. Their subsistence economy was based on widely diverse ecological resources extending from the arid interior mountains to the Channel Islands off the coast of south-central California. These numerous, intelligent, and friendly native peoples won praise from the normally disparaging priests. Inexorably, the yolk of Hispanic oppression engendered widespread disenchantment with colonial life (Heizer 1978:506). This disenchantment was in fact present throughout all zones of colonial occupation. However, circumstances unique to the Chumash set in motion a series of events that led directly to armed rebellion, pitched battles with soldiers, and eventually wholesale abandonment of the Mission Santa Bárbara.

We know that the Chumash as well as most neophytes within the mission system continued to practice many of their traditional religious cults, despite the priest's energetic attempts to destroy Indian religion. Many returned to one such cult following a devastating epidemic in 1801 (Heizer 1941). To combat this trend, a number of local Franciscans developed *confesionarios* (confessional aids). These were bilingual guides, in the native dialect and Spanish, to aid priests in confessing the neophytes. Especially effective was Padre Señán whose *confesionarios* became increasingly used to determine the number of followers of the ?Antap Cult and the extent to which the neophytes had retained pagan sexual practices that they were supposed to have abandoned. Although neophytes might be physically and psychologically coerced into accepting serflike conditions, many found solace in familiar Native traditions. This was especially true as withering waves of murderous diseases flowed over the terrified Chumash neophytes. According to a recent study of this subject, "The significant revelation of the *confesionarios* is that Chumash culture remained vital but came increasingly under Franciscan scrutiny and attack, especially after 1820!" (Sandos 1985:118).

Considerable military experience was acquired by Chumash neophytes owing to the appearance of an Argentine privateer off the coast of Alta California in 1818. Priests at Santa Bárbara and La Purísima organized their neophytes into military units. At Santa Bárbara the 180-man force was organized into archers, infantry, and cavalry lancers. They were allowed to choose their own corporals

and sergeants. The padres reported the neophytes engaged in these activities with *enthusiasm*. Although the expected invasion failed to provide combat experience, the lessons of European tactics, mass drill, and collective action were not lost on the Chumash.

Then a significant omen suddenly appeared in the form of a large comet in the December skies of 1823. It eventually developed two tails and persisted until March 1824. According to Chumash traditions, such conditions foretold of a sudden change and a new beginning (Hudson and Underhay 1978). As the approaching pre-Easter confessions of 1824 promised to be another threatening Franciscan probe of indigenous culture, the pressure on the Chumash soon reached a flash point. Only a spark was needed to ignite the hostility that had built up toward Franciscan and military colonial authority.

The routine beating of a La Purísima neophyte visiting a relative imprisoned at Mission Santa Inés inaugurated armed resistance. Neophytes from both La Purísima and Santa Inés attacked the mission guards with arrows the Saturday afternoon of February 21, 1824. A building was set on fire and two Indians were killed attacking the priests and soldiers. The Hispanics were trapped in a barricaded building until soldiers arrived the next day, by which time the rebellious neophytes had fled to the Mission La Purísima.

The neophytes there had risen up on the same day under the leadership of the charismatic and gifted La Purísima neophyte, Pacomio. They drove the priests and soliders and their families into a storeroom. Four *gente de razón* travelers who had stopped at the missions during the siege were killed by the neophytes. Seven neophytes were killed before this brief but violent skirmish ended. In exchange for their surrender, the soldiers agreed to abandon the mission and flee to Santa Inés. The local priest insisted on staying but could do little to stop the rebellion. The bewildered priests witnessed an astounding display of military preparation to defend this fortress of the rebellion. Neophytes erected palisade fortifications, cut weapon slits in the church and other buildings, and positioned two swivelguns. It was apparent that they expected an attack and were preparing to fight a pitched battle with Hispanic authorities (Bancroft 1886–1887:II:530).

On the opening day of hostilities, the Santa Inés neophytes sent a call to arms to the trusted alcalde Andrés Sagiomomatsse of mission Santa Bárbara. Fearing for the lives of his fellow neophytes, Andrés demanded that the priest order the mission *escolta* (guards) to withdraw and return to the Santa Bárbara Presidio. The local priest rode to the presidio to deliver the demand. He successfully secured the written order of the commandant for the withdrawal of the mission guard. When the priest returned, he found Andrés had broken into the armory and supplied his followers with bows, arrows, and machetes. Following receipt of their commandant's orders to withdraw, the Indians disarmed the escolta, two of whom resisted and were hacked with machetes. The soldiers were then allowed to retreat. Immediately the commandant ordered his troops to march on the mission. There they found a considerable force of Indians, several of whom were now carrying firearms. A fierce engagement erupted throughout the mission compound. Four soldiers suffered arrow wounds, and

ance and adaptation to that empire's institutions. Without such efforts, I am afraid that we may find our recollection of this period to be represented only by the dashing Hispanic soldier/explorers, pious padres, romantic dons, and, of course, the "docile" mission Indian.

Spain's plans for the extension of its church/crown empire into Alta California were prompted by fears of rival European encroachment of its northwestern frontier. The instruments of conquest were time-tested and reliable. First, Spanish soldiers and Franciscan priests would occupy strategic places along the coast. The soldiers would establish military forts or presidios, while the Franciscans established missions. The missions, however, had power and functions far beyond simple religious conversion. They were to be the economic backbone of the colony. Once Indians were baptized, they were no longer free to leave the missions. These institutions eventually developed into huge feudal estates, on lands stolen by Franciscan and military authorities, and grew rich from the efforts of a mass of unpaid forced laborers. Over two hundred years of experience in this sort of activity guided the priest Junípero Serra. The final step in this process was the importation of civilian colonists (sometimes criminals recruited from frontier prisons) to establish pueblos. Supposedly after 10 years under Franciscan authority, the Indians were to be granted pueblo lands and were to take their place as peons in colonial society. However, over the years the Franciscans found one excuse after another to extend their authority over the Indians. Reluctant to give up this rich empire, Franciscans blamed Indians themselves for the delay. Neophytes were finally wrenched from the grip of the Franciscan order after almost 70 years of feudal domination (Bolton 1964:187–211). Secularization laws that followed provided extremely limited opportunities for exneophytes to claim lands. No systematic effort was made by church or secular authorities to inform these survivors of their "rights" under Mexican Laws.

Mission Conditions

The beneficiaries of the Crown and Franciscan plan of empire rapidly discovered the hard reality of colonial exploitation. In the beginning, most California Indians were lured into the missions with gifts and other clever inducements. Almost at once, assaults on female neophytes commenced. This unleashed an epidemic of venereal diseases among the Indians. But that was only the begin- of humiliating and degrading treatment suffered by the neophytes and gentiles (non-Christians) alike. The colonists' livestock began to devastate native food. Indian lands were seized for colonial institutions. Their game was hunted without permission, and forced labor was introduced. Whole villages were uprooted and forced to relocate at the mission site. Young unmarried neophytes of both sexes were locked up in crowded barracks at night. All native religious behavior was forbidden. Native culture was to be abandoned in exchange for a life of coercive paternal domination (Cook 1976:1–161).

The rigid discipline required by the Franciscans was enforced through religious propaganda, threats, and intimidation. Squads of soliders with their technologically superior weapons and horses were stationed at each mission. These

soldiers were reinforced by royal presidio troops stationed at four points along the Camino Real. The priests also orchestrated a system of informants, with some natives acting as majordomos, and kept the neophytes in line with liberal doses of the whip. Examples and analysis of these conditions can be found in the writings of Spanish church and military authorities, foreign visitors, and historians and anthropologists (Bancroft 1886–1887:Volumes I and II; Cook 1976; Costo 1988; Geiger and Meighan 1976).

Catastrophic attacks of virulent European diseases took a heavy toll of native lives. Spanish medical practices being ineffective, the priests could only watch as thousands of their laborers suffered and died. The death rates for these epidemics ranged as high as 60 percent of the total population (Cook 1976:3–34). This unfortunate situation fueled the Franciscan demand for more laborers. Thus missionary-inspired paramilitary expeditions began to recruit reluctant tribes for conversion as early as 1797 (Cook 1976:75).

As a result of missionization and the military occupation of their country, the unfortunate natives suffered a rapid and steep population decline (see Walker and others in this volume). In some cases, the process became irreversible and whole tribes eventually disappeared (Cook 1976:399–446).

Internal Resistance

Not surprisingly, the Indians began to react negatively to this threatening situation. Resistance to the colonial "new order" emerged almost at once. This study reviews native passive and active resistance to the missions, missionaries, and soldiers on this remote rim of Christendom.

Undoubtedly passive resistance to the new order was the most widespread negative response to the classic mission environment. Several factors made this so. The nearly total absence of experience in organizing and carrying out warfare hampered native military organizational efforts. Traditional political authority seldom went beyond the village level. The neophytes were targets of a well-established church–military plan featuring an elaborate system of native informants, majordomos, and coopted local captains. These factors, combined with the cultural shock of removal from their native villages and the conglomeration of other native groups thrown together and withering under virulent catastrophic epidemics, provided ample cause for internal resistance.

Infanticide and Abortions

One of the most disturbing trends in passive resistance was infanticide and abortions practiced by native women. A contemporary sympathetic observer married to a San Gabriel neophyte informs us, "They necessarily became accustomed to these things [being raped by Spanish Soldiers], but their disgust and abhorrence never left them till many years later. In fact every white child born among them for a long period was secretly strangled and buried" (Heizer 1968:70).

The priests went to extremes to prevent such practices. Lorenzo Asisara, a

ance and adaptation to that empire's institutions. Without such efforts, I am afraid that we may find our recollection of this period to be represented only by the dashing Hispanic soldier/explorers, pious padres, romantic dons, and, of course, the "docile" mission Indian.

Spain's plans for the extension of its church/crown empire into Alta California were prompted by fears of rival European encroachment of its northwestern frontier. The instruments of conquest were time-tested and reliable. First, Spanish soldiers and Franciscan priests would occupy strategic places along the coast. The soldiers would establish military forts or presidios, while the Franciscans established missions. The missions, however, had power and functions far beyond simple religious conversion. They were to be the economic backbone of the colony. Once Indians were baptized, they were no longer free to leave the missions. These institutions eventually developed into huge feudal estates, on lands stolen by Franciscan and military authorities, and grew rich from the efforts of a mass of unpaid forced laborers. Over two hundred years of experience in this sort of activity guided the priest Junípero Serra. The final step in this process was the importation of civilian colonists (sometimes criminals recruited from frontier prisons) to establish pueblos. Supposedly after 10 years under Franciscan authority, the Indians were to be granted pueblo lands and were to take their place as peons in colonial society. However, over the years the Franciscans found one excuse after another to extend their authority over the Indians. Reluctant to give up this rich empire, Franciscans blamed Indians themselves for the delay. Neophytes were finally wrenched from the grip of the Franciscan order after almost 70 years of feudal domination (Bolton 1964:187–211). Secularization laws that followed provided extremely limited opportunities for exneophytes to claim lands. No systematic effort was made by church or secular authorities to inform these survivors of their "rights" under Mexican Laws.

Mission Conditions

The beneficiaries of the Crown and Franciscan plan of empire rapidly discovered the hard reality of colonial exploitation. In the beginning, most California Indians were lured into the missions with gifts and other clever inducements. Almost at once, assaults on female neophytes commenced. This unleashed an epidemic of venereal diseases among the Indians. But that was only the beginof humiliating and degrading treatment suffered by the neophytes and gentiles (non-Christians) alike. The colonists' livestock began to devastate native food. Indian lands were seized for colonial institutions. Their game was hunted without permission, and forced labor was introduced. Whole villages were uprooted and forced to relocate at the mission site. Young unmarried neophytes of both sexes were locked up in crowded barracks at night. All native religious behavior was forbidden. Native culture was to be abandoned in exchange for a life of coercive paternal domination (Cook 1976:1–161).

The rigid discipline required by the Franciscans was enforced through religious propaganda, threats, and intimidation. Squads of soliders with their technologically superior weapons and horses were stationed at each mission. These